

Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board
Market-Driven Workforce System Committee

July 12, 2004
Minutes

WIB Members Present

Scott LeMire, Vice Chair
Phil Hanson
Kirk Hayes
Nancy Hendrickson
Dean Howard
Lorrie Louder
Jerry McElroy
Mary McKee
John Mohr
Joe Richburg
Ellen Watters

Members Absent

Ginny Sullivan EA
Bob Veilleux
Tené Wells
William Yang

Staff/Guests Present

Kitty Gogins, WIB CEO
Kate Bates, WIB Staff
Terry Zurn, Workforce
Solutions

Call to Order

Scott LeMire, vice-chair, called the meeting to order at 1:03 pm.

Approve Minutes

Motion made by John Mohr with second by Phil Hanson to approve the minutes of May 13 as written.

Discuss Innovative Boards Network

Our WIB has recently been invited to become a member of the “Innovators Network”, a network of 15 innovative WIBs from across the country. At the end of June, Kitty attended her first meeting. She shared her key learnings from this meeting. Some of them are:

- This network is an excellent source of benchmarking and ideas
- Funding sources outside of WIA are key to innovation and supporting strategic role of WIB
- Being a 501(c)(3) is critical to fundraising outside of WIA
- WIBs evolve differently based on the needs of the community
- Many WIB accomplishments are through others (in partnership)
- The model that works best for WIB planning is “organic”- defining a focus area with opportunistic progress in areas
- Network members feel we need to grow to three or four staff to fulfill our strategic plan

The committee was interested to see if the Innovators Network could ever meet here in Saint Paul. It was suggested that, if they meet here, we could ask them to meet for an hour or so with our WIB or Workforce committee. Kitty will see if this might be possible.

Revise Committee Work Plan

The Workforce Committee work plan needs to be updated due to progress made against last year’s goals. See attachment 1 for the flipchart notes from this meeting. The group discussed how to structure the plan, and felt the “organic” structure would work well. Areas of focus discussed were staying abreast of labor market trends; continuing our work on current priorities of Healthcare, Bioscience, and English Language Learners (ELL); and adding some focus on Small Business. Mary McKee has had small businesses calling her seeking resources for their employees, and small business owners at the meeting echoed her sentiment- small businesses do not have the resources that larger companies have, and are in need of services. The group would also like to remain focused on the demand-driven business services. Through this, some of the other focus areas can be worked on (e.g.- ELL and Small Business). Also discussed was the need to narrow the scope of the work plan to accommodate staff time, and focus on outcomes and action resulting from our work.

The meeting structure and value was also discussed. This committee has not had very good attendance in the past (today was excellent). While some logistics concerns were mentioned, it was pointed out that if members really found the meetings valuable they would make the time. Since much of the work is done in ad hoc committees, the concern was expressed that too much of meeting time is spent on ad hoc information sharing which is not sufficiently value added. It was suggested that this committee might meet less frequently, having most of the work done in ad hocs, with the full committee only meeting perhaps two or three times per year for planning and other value added work. In between meetings, information sharing would be handled via emails.

As pre-reading for the next meeting, Kitty will provide work plans for all current ad hoc committees. The group will then use the meeting time to discuss priorities and ad hoc committees.

Adjourn

Scott Lemire adjourned the meeting at 2:45 with the completion of the agenda.

Next Meeting- September 9, 1:00-2:30, Conley Conference Room, Midway Hospital

Attachment 1: Work Plan Revision Flip Chart Notes (Grouped by topic)

Plan Areas

Labor market trends

- Refresh demand and supply data for major assessment due to state in February 2005
- Labor market rebound- increased vacancies in additional sector...where?
- Manufacturing- what is happening with Dislocated Workers?
 - Shortages in certain sectors... deeper within categories e.g. punch press operator
- Hmong Refugees- broader topic of New Americans
 - Hispanics moving in, but less press
 - Somali as well
- Translation to from occupational needs to skill sets
 - Bioscience grant looking at translating to skill sets
- Suburban Economic Development link
- Broader stakeholder involvement in sector work

Customer Driven

- Keep aware of opportunities
- Keep attention on customers
- At the end of this plan priorities
 - Accessing customer info on slices selected
 - Interviews, focus groups, research...
 - Pick x new sectors every year and have a process to follow
 - E.g. annual questionnaire for small business

Area of Additional Gap: Small Business

- MNSCU getting a lot of small business requests- not coordinated, varying definitions
- Missing struggling small business support (not start up)
- This is about incumbent worker
- What is causing the change in their labor needs
 - Technology
 - Couldn't find individual to hire with all needed skills
 - Business growth so acquired new tools
- Types of services needed: grant writing (MJSB), customer service, inventory management, etc.
- Mary M. taking to Metro Consortium of Schools
- Training Fulfillment Center?
 - Right now most usage: job seeker from WFC

- Employer side will be up and running by 1/05 (presented at June WIB meeting)
- ISEEK coordinating, but there is a concern that ISEEK is only funded by system for 1 more year, (expected to be self supporting by then)
- Arena of Customized Training
 - MNSCU, ESI, etc.
 - Folks recruited; #trained and # hired
 - Sometimes foundations take on for multiple companies
- Small Business perspective (Dean H)
 - Awareness? Publicity, promote services
 - Evening offerings key
 - SCORE, WomenVentures Start-up, Center For Small Business and Entrepreneurship (Dakota)

Need to Prioritize Gaps

- Last year goals still credible, or superceded?
- Gaps from 12/03
 - ELL
 - Cut across all sectors and curricula
 - Needed broadly
 - ABE-MNSCU, Credit transfer, Best practices, lack of funding, Workforce Solutions Reading buddies/ABE to employers
 - Healthcare... # activities doing already; what do we have capacity to do beyond those?
 - Biosciences... Workforce Link Project
- Identify new gaps in relationship to previous goals...instead of broadening our discussion, NARROW
- Broader requires more staff
- Where is greatest need and can have most impact?
 - Screen gaps
 - Where/how greatest impact
- End up with numerics... how many get jobs- ACTION
- Around Small business area
 - Survey or focus group- ask around training needs, would ELL be high?
 - Company dependent- warehouse and fast food sector
 - Need to understand needs
 - System where by training can be developed...become more entrepreneurial
 - Biosciences is working that way- PILOT of demand side look
 - Small business component to healthcare and biosciences work?
 - Constantly reviewing and learning
- Keep current going and add as capacity for council to strategize

Meeting Attendance

- Not a lot back
- Distance
- Meeting day
- Value if too focused e.g. with healthcare and bioscience are other members getting enough out of it?
- Today work is done in smaller groups with exchange of info here...need more action items at full group meetings
- Important to find out what is happening
- Since this is a larger committee easier to defer to other members (and not show up)
- Proposal: Meeting less frequently- action oriented with info sharing done electronically
- Search for relevancy